

Tallgrass Sierran

January/February 1999 Volume 27 No. 1

THE HEART OF ILLINOIS GROUP OF THE SIERRA CLUB ♦ P.O. Box 3593, Peoria, IL 61614 ☎ (309) 745-1920

HOI Group Meetings

WED
JAN 20

**The Peoria Park District:
Current Issues and Future Directions**
Forest Park Nature Center, 7 p.m.

Peoria Park Board member David Pittman will speak about current park district issues and share his thoughts about future directions. Mr. Pittman is a longtime environmental activist and a leading advocate for seeking Nature Preserve status for Singing Woods. Other current issues sure to be covered are the planned RecPlex along Peoria's riverfront and the proposed sale of Madison Park Golf Course land to Walgreen's. There will be plenty of time for questions. *All are welcome! Refreshments served after the meeting.*

WED
FEB 17

**Alaska: Nome, Denali, and the
Pribilof Islands**
Forest Park Nature Center, 7 p.m.

Fellow Sierrans Maury Brucker and Emiko Yang will present a slide show of their 1997 trip to Alaska. Various points of interest include Denali National Park, Nome, and the Pribilof Islands, a major seal breeding area in the Bering Sea. Come and enjoy the beautiful Alaskan scenery and wildlife as Maury and Emiko share their experiences with us! *All are welcome! Refreshments served after the meeting.*



*A free gift, determined by a
drawing, is given to an attending
nonmember at each
HOI Group meeting.*

Oppose the Ring Road

By JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Environmental activist Louis Marchini of Washington, Illinois, has written an extensive article titled "The Dark Side of the American Dream" which details concerns about the Eastern Ring Road proposed for the Morton, Washington, and Germantown Hills area. Copies of his article will be available at Sierra Club group meetings. He urges us all to consider the long term negative effects of the Ring Road, and relates such highway construction to important issues such as food, world resources, and the quality of life itself. Mr. Marchini urges us to speak out against the Ring Road, and to call attention to the "dark side" of this project which is loss of farmland and damage to our inner cities, environment, and natural resources.

JOIN US ON OUR ANNUAL STARVED ROCK WINTER HIKE!

When - Sunday, February 7

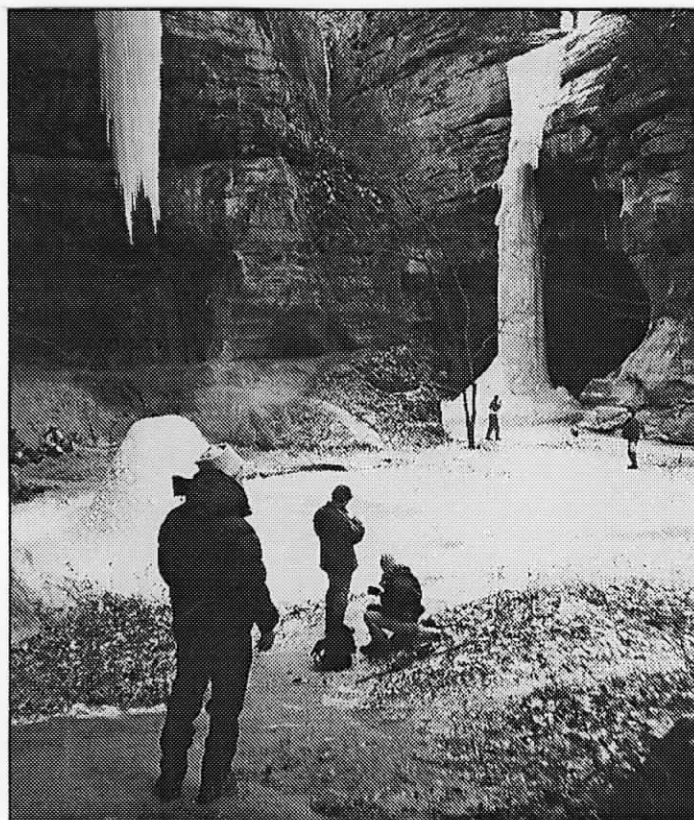
Where - Meet at Forest Park Nature Center,
9 a.m., or Starved Rock Lodge, 10:30 a.m.

What - Bring Lunch for the Trail / Dress Warm

What (About Dinner) - Mona's in Toluca

Who - HOI members and the public

Questions? - Al Harkrader, (309) 682-8462



From 1996: HOI Starved Rock winter hikers check the ice formations in Tonti Canyon where they stopped for lunch under the frozen waterfalls. Photo: Al Harkrader

A Civil Action in Illinois: Caterpillar Dump Case Going to Trial

By JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Stefan Noe, Attorney for the Chicago Office of Citizens for a Better Environment, will be battling one of Chicago's largest law firms in an effort to get Caterpillar to come clean about their East Peoria dump site. From the mid-1950's to the mid-1970's, Caterpillar, Inc., dumped cyanide, sludges, solvents, and other industrial wastes in a wetland near the Illinois River. Citizens for a Better Environment (CBE) filed suit under the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act to have Caterpillar test the site and clean it up if necessary. In November, Federal Judge Michael Mihm ruled that "There is at least a realistic danger that the Illinois River will sustain a direct injury." Caterpillar does not dispute that materials were disposed of at the site, and that there potentially could be a pathway for ground water from the dump to enter the river. The company maintains it has monitored the site and concluded that it's not going to be a problem. (Peoria Journal Star, November 18, 1998, article by Elaine Hopkins)

In addition to concerns about rusty drums of toxic substances at the dump, a real and present danger could exist for Peoria drinking water. Peoria drinking water is pumped from several locations, including four Dodge Street wells, located near the foot of Western Avenue, which is not far across the river from the Caterpillar dump site. Downstream river water users may also be impacted by toxics that could be leaching from the Cat landfill. Your help is needed! Please see related information about Citizens for a Better Environment and consider sending in a donation to this group.

CITIZENS FOR A BETTER ENVIRONMENT

407 S. Dearborn, Suite 1775, Chicago, IL 60605
(phone 312-939-1530 or FAX 312-939-2536)

☒ **Yes!** I want to join CBE and urge them on in their fight to have Caterpillar "come clean" on what is in CAT's East Peoria dump site!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: () _____

Donation Amount: \$25. _____ \$40. _____ Other \$ _____

_____ I would prefer not to be on your membership list. My donation toward your Caterpillar lawsuit is enclosed.

Join Citizens for a Better Environment and/or Send a Donation to Help the Caterpillar Lawsuit!

By JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Citizens for a Better Environment was founded in 1971, and has offices in Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Their mission is to work to prevent and fight environmental health threats through research, advocacy, public education and citizen empowerment.

Focusing on their Midwestern states and regional issues, Citizens for a Better Environment helped write and pass landmark waste management laws in Wisconsin and Illinois that established recycling goals and required long-term planning for waste reduction; CBE stopped construction of new medical waste burners throughout the region and is promoting waste reduction and recycling by health care institutions; they

helped establish Wisconsin air rules which protect the state residents from toxins with some of the toughest standards in the country; CBE decreased contamination from Minnesota's largest illegal polluters of the Mississippi River through citizen lawsuits; and they won a U.S. Supreme Court decision against the City of Chicago that ended the mismanagement of toxic incinerator ash. They have an extensive list of additional successes through their twenty-seven year history. Please consider joining Citizens for a Better Environment. Any donation toward their lawsuit against Caterpillar would also be greatly appreciated. Mail in your donation with the form above.

You can make a difference!

- ☐ **The White House:**
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue., NW,
Washington D.C. 20500
Comment Line: (202) 456-1111
E-mail: president@whitehouse.gov
- ☐ **U.S. Senators:**
Richard Durbin / Peter Fitzgerald
U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510
Capital Switchboard: (202) 224-3121
- ☐ **U.S. Representatives:**
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
Capitol Switchboard: (202) 224-3121
Local: Ray LaHood (309) 671-7027
Lane Evans (309) 793-5760
- ☐ **Governor George Ryan:**
State House, Springfield, IL 62706
Ph. (217) 782-6830
- ☐ **State Senator or Representative:**
State House, Springfield, IL 62706
Capitol Switchboard: (217) 782-2000

Action Alert! Call Senator Fitzgerald

By JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Now is your chance to call Illinois' new Senator, Peter Fitzgerald and urge him to become an original cosponsor of "America's Redrock Wilderness Act." Utah's Redrock canyonlands and desert stretches are among the most spectacular wild lands in America, and they contain the largest remaining roadless areas in the lower 48 states. These lands are being threatened by oil exploration, mining developments, and rapidly expanding off-road vehicle use. Each of us needs to encourage our new Senator to sign on as an original cosponsor for preserving Utah wilderness. Please call Senator Fitzgerald (Illinois office 847-963-1998 or Washington, D.C. 202-224-3121) and ask that he cosponsor the "America's Redrock Wilderness Act" to preserve our nations heritage of Utah wilderness.

December Potluck Had Great Food & Slides

If you are missing a small silver tongs that you took to the December Sierra potluck at Forest Park Nature Center, please phone Joyce at 688-0950. Your tongs want to go home! Also unclaimed after the dinner is a package of heavy duty plastic forks. Thanks to all who joined in the wintery evening get-together. Rudy Habben showed some great slides of his Earthwatch project and his visit to Scotland.

Peoria Park Board Likely to Consider Singing Woods January 27th

By JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

The Peoria Park Board may vote on whether or not to investigate Nature Preserve Status for Singing Woods at its regular meeting, Wednesday, January 27th. If you have not yet called or written to your Park District trustee, now is the time! Heart of Illinois Sierra Club members have been making a real effort to convince the Peoria Park Board that Singing Woods should be given the protection of Nature Preserve status. A key issue is that the entire 900 acres of the park should be considered for protection. Singing Woods has no roads, and its closed canopy of trees provides important habitat for migrating neotropical songbirds. Singing Woods also has clear water streams that have been rated the most biologically healthy in the entire state of Illinois (Riverwatch Report, 1997). Nature Preserve status would protect the park from horseback riding and other more intensive uses that would degrade its environmental quality. Please contact the following Park Board members as soon as possible:

Jim Cassidy (Pres.)	3221 N. Bigelow, Peoria, IL 61604	685-1648
Roger Allen	5926 N. Sherwood, Peoria, IL 61614	691-5464
Stan Budzinski	3401 W. Brookside, Peoria, IL 61615	682-5382
Jim Cummings	419 W. Maywood, Peoria, IL 61604	685-2935
Bob Johnson	2514 W. Starr, Peoria, IL 61605	637-0146
Rocky Vonachen	813 W. Fairlawn, Peoria, IL 61614	693-3070

Trustee David Pittman is a leading advocate for seeking Nature Preserve status for Singing Woods and you can convey your thanks to him for all his efforts by phoning 688-7708 or writing to him at 2803 N. Peoria, Peoria, IL 61603.

Sierra EXCOM Votes to Oppose Sale of Golf Course Land

At its January Board meeting, the HOI Sierra Executive Committee voted to state it is opposed to the Peoria Park District consideration of selling a corner of Madison Golf Course for commercial development. Group members will be attending the January 13th Park Board Meeting to convey this to the Board.



Yes you can!
I-TAN

Do you want a quick, easy way to make yourself heard on environmental issues? Join the Illinois Telephone Activist Network (I-TAN). Approximately every two weeks you will receive late-breaking action alerts and the officials to contact to make your opinion count. **To join call Mary Bodell, 745-5479, the HOI HOTLINE, 745-1920, or send an e-mail to jwosik@mtco.com.** We need your name, phone number, and if you prefer e-mail notification, your e-mail address. **You DO NOT have to be a Sierra Club member to join.**



New Heart of Illinois Officers

New HOI officers elected at the January 7th ExCom meeting are Cindy Ewing, Chair; Ralph Ginn, Vice-Chair; Norman Ewing, Secretary; Joyce Blumenshine and Rudy Habben, Conservation Co-Chairs; and Mary Bodell, Outings Chair. Grayce Hayworth remains Treasurer and Cindy Matthias Membership Chair. New ExCom members this year are Norman Ewing, Ralph Ginn, Grace Haworth, and Richard Klatt. The new ExCom appointed Chris Meydam to fill the vacancy created by Mike Ingram's resignation. *Great thanks goes to all those who spent considerable time and energy serving as HOI officers over the past year, and to the new officers for the coming year!*

Clean Water Celebration

By RUDY HABBEN

This year's Clean Water Celebration will be held on Monday, March 22 at the Peoria Civic Center. This environmental science fair for junior high students has become an annual event and has improved each of the past five years, attracting more students. This year over 50 schools and 3,000 students are expected to attend.

A major goal of the organizing committee is to have each of the exhibits interactive so students will learn by doing. The Sierra Club booth will display several water tanks, demonstrating the impact of suspended silt on plant growth. The aim is to have students learn some basic concepts on turbidity, light, and aquatic plants.

The program is open to the public. This year TV actor Hugh O'Brien will be the main speaker. He now has a career as a motivational speaker to get people active in environmental projects.

☐ **Yes**, I want to help safeguard our children's precious natural heritage. My check is enclosed.

Name

Address

City

State Zip

Phone (Optional) ()

Contributions, gifts or dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to Sierra magazine and \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

	INDIVIDUAL	JOINT
INTRODUCTORY	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
REGULAR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35	<input type="checkbox"/> \$43
SUPPORTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$60	<input type="checkbox"/> \$68
CONTRIBUTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$120	<input type="checkbox"/> \$128
LIFE	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
SENIOR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$19	<input type="checkbox"/> \$27
STUDENT	<input type="checkbox"/> \$19	<input type="checkbox"/> \$27

Enclose check and mail to:

Sierra Club
P.O. Box 52968
Boulder, CO, 80322-2968



PROTECT AMERICA'S ENVIRONMENT.
For Our Families, For Our Future

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W99901

HOI Group Calendar

January

20 Group Meeting, 7 p.m.

WED Forest Park Nature Center. *David Pittman, The Peoria Park District: Current Issues and Future Directions.* Everyone is welcome!

30 Once in an Almost Blue Moon Moonlight Hike, 7 p.m.



Join us the night before January's second full moon for a hike at the Marshall State Fish and Wildlife Area,

adjacent to the backwaters of the Illinois River. DNR wildlife area manager Larry Rice will lead the hike. We will carpool from Forest Park Nature Center at 7 p.m. Dress for cold, windy, wet weather - boots, hats, gloves, and flashlights are must-have gear! Only appropriately dressed people should consider going on this hike. Hot drinks and other refreshments will be available afterwards.

NOTE: R.S.V.P. by 3 p.m. on Jan 30 a must! Call Mary at 745-5479 for more details and to R.S.V.P.



February

2 Executive Meeting, 7 p.m.

TUE Davis Bros Pizza, 2402 E. Washington, East Peoria.

7 Starved Rock Winter Hike, 9 a.m.

SUN This traditional hike starts by car pooling at the Forest Park Nature Center. . . or meeting at the Starved Rock Lodge Great Hall at 10:30 a.m. Bring something to eat and drink on the trail during the 3-4 hour outing, and dress for the weather. Following the hike a stop is planned at Mona's in Toluca on the way home. *Call Al or Mary Harkrader at (309) 682-8462 for more information.*



17 Group Meeting, 7 p.m.

WED Forest Park Nature Center. *Maury Brucker and Emiko Yang, Alaska: Nome, Denali, and the Pribilof Islands.* Everyone is welcome!

17 Newsletter Deadline

WED Send articles for March and April to: John Wosik, 3403 W. Richwoods Blvd., Peoria, IL 61604, or jwosik@mtco.com

24 Newsletter Mailing, 7 p.m.

WED Peoria Pizza Works; Everyone welcome!

March

2 Executive Meeting, 7 p.m.

TUE Davis Bros Pizza, 2402 E. Washington, East Peoria.

22 Clean Water Celebration

MON Peoria Civic Center, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Open to the public. The HOI Group will again have a booth. (See the newsletter article.) *Call Rudy Habben, 685-5605, for more information.*

Other Events: (Not sponsored by the Sierra Club but provided as a public service.)



Friends of the Rock Island Trail Workdays

Workdays are **Saturday February 6** and **Saturday March 6**. Meet at 9 a.m. at the Alta end maintenance building. Directions: Go about 1 mile west of Alta on Rt. 91, turn right on Radnor Rd., follow road around curves, maintenance building is on your right just before railroad tracks. Call Chris at 682-0549 for more information. *Everyone is welcome!*

Natural Resources and Your Development Conference

March 3, 1999
Holiday Inn City Centre, Peoria, IL
featuring keynote speaker

Ian McHarg
author of "Design With Nature"

For information contact:
Steve Childers
Tri-County Regional Planning Commission
(309) 694-9330

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS:

- Conservation Design
- Streambank Protection
- Exhibits
- Integrating open/green space into developments
- Stormwater control
- Workshops March 2 & 4

New Officers

Heart of Illinois Sierra Club

HOTLINE: Local Meetings & Outings • Action Alerts (309)
• Public Contacts • Leave Messages 745-1920

Executive Committee

Chair	Cindy Ewing	693-1881
Vice-Chair	Ralph Ginn	274-3289
Secretary	Norman Ewing	347-8921
Treasurer	Grayce Haworth	246-8397
Calendar Sales	Chris Meydam	682-0549
	Richard Klatt	274-3792
	Laurel Williams	244-7238
Conservation Co-Chair	Joyce Blumenshine	688-0950
Conservation Co-Chair	Rudy Habben	685-5605
Membership Chair	Cindy Matthias	686-4134
Outings Chair / I-TAN	Mary Bodell	745-5479
Newsletter Editor	John Wosik	682-8950

HEART OF ILLINOIS

Sierra Club

P.O. Box 3593
Peoria, IL 61614

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